SOFT SWITCH USING DISTRIBUTED FIREWALLS FOR LOAD SHARING VOICE-OVER-IP TRAFFIC IN AN IP NETWORK

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5   A switch capable of handling voice-over-IP (VoIP) traffic between calling devices and called devices. The switch comprises: 1) call application nodes for executing call process server applications, wherein a first call process server application and a similar second call process server application form a first load 10 sharing group server application; and 2) network address translation nodes for executing firewall server applications. A first firewall server application executed on a first network address translation node is associated with a similar second firewall server application executed on a second network address 15 translation nodes separate from the first network address translation node. The first and second firewall server applications form a second load sharing group server application. The second load sharing group server application receives VoIP traffic and selects one of the first and second firewall server 20 applications to verify that the VoIP traffic is authorized to access at least one of the call process server applications in the call application nodes according to a load distribution algorithm.